

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The specification is amended by the present response to correct minor idiomatic informalities. Claims 17-20 are also amended by the present response to address the claim objections noted on page 2 of the Office Action.

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 17-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 5,765,077 to Sakurai et al. (herein "Sakurai"). Claims 2-16 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims.

Initially, applicants gratefully acknowledge the early indication of the allowable subject matter of claims 2-16.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 1 and 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Sakurai, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Applicants initially note each of independent claims 1 and 17-21 is amended by the present response to clarify features recited therein. Specifically, those claims no longer recite that the AC voltage has a waveform pattern of particular noise, but now instead recite the AC voltage having a waveform pattern of "at least one of white noise or pink noise". That subject matter is believed to be clear from the original specification, see for example original claims 2 and 7. Further, such features are believed to clarify each of claims 1 and 17-21 over the applied art to Sakurai.

In each of independent claims 1 and 17-21 a DC voltage and an AC voltage are superposed and applied to a charge roller. As now clarified in each of independent claims 1 and 17-21, that AC voltage is at least one of pink noise or white noise. Sakurai is not believed to teach or suggest any similar subject matter. The Office Action cites Sakurai at

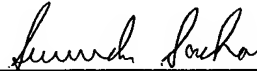
column 11, line 62, to column 12, line 1 to disclose combining a DC voltage and an AC voltage, but Sakurai does not teach or suggest that the AC voltage is at least one of white noise or pink noise. Further, the Office Action references Sakurai at column 4, lines 26-30 with respect to a referenced "charging noise". However, applicants note that "charging noise" in Sakurai is not even related to an AC voltage pattern superposed with a DC voltage. Further, clearly at column 4, lines 26-30 Sakurai does not teach or suggest superposing an AC voltage of either white noise or pink noise.

In such ways, applicants respectfully submit each of amended independent claims 1 and 17-21, and the claims dependent therefrom, patentably distinguish over the teachings in Sakurai.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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